

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of the claims in the application:

1. (Amended) A method, comprising determining, according to an earliest deadline first (EDF) process, a schedule for transmission times of various segments of digital content across multiple channels so as to permit any number of content consumers to begin playback of said segments of digital content from an origination point thereof within a waiting time of a request for such playback, wherein in the EDF process a next transmission time for one of the various segments of digital content is determined by first finding an earliest deadline amongst a list of current deadlines for each of the various segments and selecting this segment for transmission.
2. The method of claim 1 wherein the various segments of digital content together comprise a movie.
- 3 - 4. (Cancelled).
5. (Amended) The method of claim 4 1 wherein the earliest deadline so chosen is verified to be later than a finishing time for a last transmitted segment.
6. (Amended) The method of claim 4 1 wherein a new deadline for transmission of the selected segment is determined according to $T + t_i + t_d$, where T is a beginning time for the transmission of the selected segment, i is a segment number for the selected segment, t_i is the playback time of segment i and t_d is the waiting time.
- 7 - 12. (Cancelled).

13. (Amended) The method of claim 4 1 wherein in the EDF process, the deadlines associated with the various segments are computed according to a process wherein conflicts for transmissions over the multiple channels are resolved by scheduling a segment with an earlier playback time closer to its deadline for transmission than a segment with a later playback time.

14 - 18. (Cancelled).

19. (Amended) The method of claim 18 1 wherein a transmission bandwidth of multiple times that of the ~~multimedia presentation~~ digital content is allocated for transmission of the segments and each segment is transmitted repeatedly based on the computed schedule.

20. (Cancelled).

21. (Amended) The method of claim 18 1 further comprising receiving the segments following transmission thereof ~~transmitted over the a~~ broadcast network, storing the segments in temporary storage, and playing back the segments ~~as soon as the delay time has elapsed~~.

22 - 26. (Cancelled).

27. (Amended) A method as in claim 18 1 further comprising computing an overlap period between an end of a current presentation and a beginning of a next presentation, to minimize interruptions therebetween.

28. (Amended) A server configured to generate transmission schedules for each of a number of segments of a multimedia presentation to be transmitted over a multiple channels of a broadcast network, said schedules computed according to ~~a specified delay time that does not depend on time lengths of the segments~~ an earliest deadline first (EDF) procedure in which a

next segment to be transmitted is determined by first finding an earliest transmission deadline amongst a list of current transmission deadlines for each of the segments and selecting this segment for transmission.

29 - 35. (Cancelled).